



## Office of the Mayor

### **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Renovation begins to expand Leeper Tennis Center**

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Work already is under way to renovate and expand the historic Leeper Tennis Center complex, 800 N. Lafayette Blvd., adding new spectator seating, improved maintenance access and an additional court for doubles play as part of a more efficient layout.

Although the total number of courts will be reduced from 15 to 14, the overall size of the complex will expand 20 feet to the south. A central spectator area will be added between eight singles courts and six doubles courts.

Court play officially closes July 30, and city park crews already are preparing to begin demolition work Aug. 1.

The \$450,000 project is funded by \$400,000 from the city's capital improvements budget. In addition, the South Bend Department of Parks and Recreation has submitted a \$50,000 grant application to the U.S. Tennis Association.

The new asphalt courts will use the U.S. Tennis color system, which features a blue court on a green background.

As one of eight lighted and 10 unlighted tennis facilities in the South Bend park system, the Leeper Tennis Center is the site of the annual South Bend city tournament as well as high-school contests from schools throughout the region.

Plans for the construction were previously approved by both the city's Park and Recreation Board and the Historic Preservation Commission of South Bend and St. Joseph County. Leeper Park, established in 1902 as South Bend's second park, is the only park identified as a local historic landmark. The tennis center's clubhouse was completed in 1968. Reconstruction of the Leeper Tennis Center was identified as a priority in the

park department's 2004-08 master plan.

Reconstruction efforts have meant the removal of 16 pine trees at the southern end of the complex. The parks department plans to replace those trees with either new pines or other trees more appropriate to Leeper Park's setting along the southern perimeter of the rejuvenated tennis complex.

Work is expected to be completed in fall 2007.

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